

THE QUIVER

Saturday, April 21, 1866.



Drawn by G. J. PINWELL.]

[Engraved by DALZIELS.]

"He now began to inquire which was the old —."—p. 482.

THE TWO SAILOR BOYS. A TRUE TALE.

BY WILLIAM H. G. KINGSTON, AUTHOR OF "PETER THE WHALER," "TRUE BLUE," ETC. ETC. ETC.

ON a miserable pallet bedstead, in a small attic of one of the meanest houses in the lowest portion of a provincial town in the south of England, a woman lay dying. The curtainless window and window-panes, stuffed with straw, the scanty patchwork covering to the bed, the single rickety chair, the unswept floor, the damp, mildewed walls, the door falling from its hinges, told of pinching

poverty. On the opposite corner to the bedstead there was a heap of straw, to serve as another bed, and against the wall a much-battered sea-chest and an open basket, containing even now a few rotting oranges, some damaged tapes, and such articles as are vended by small hawkers. Standing by the bed-side was a lad with an intelligent, not ill-favoured, countenance, though sickly, and expressive of deep grief, as he gazed on the face of one who had ever been a kind mother to him, and from whom he now knew full well that he was to be parted for ever.

"Ned, my boy, I have done my best to keep myself and thee from the workhouse," said the woman, trying to lift herself up on her arm, that she might the better see the lad. "It has been a hard struggle, but I have done it for thy father's sake. He was a sailor, and would never have thought to see me come to this pass. Thou must be one, too, Ned. It's a rough life, but better far than starving on shore. I've done little for thee, lad, but feed thee, and try to teach thee to be honest, as thy father was. Be honest, Ned, whatever ye do, for thy poor mother's sake. But for thee, lad, I'd have left the weary world many a long year ago."

"Oh, mother, mother, stay now—oh, do!" cried the lad. "Won't the doctor help you—won't the parson?"

"No, lad; no doctor, no parson, can keep me here. But I'd like to see the parson. Maybe he'd tell me about the place I'm going to; for it's far off, I wot, and little I know of the road."

"Oh, mother, I'll run and fetch him."

Just as Ned was going, the dying woman sunk down, exhausted with talking. "Don't leave me, boy," she faintly murmured; "it's too late now. May God hear a widow's prayer, and be merciful to you, and forgive me."

Her voice sank—the last words were gasped out. Her son bent his head to hear her: he stood gazing at her face, expecting to hear her speak again. Gradually he became aware that he was alone in the world. His grief was too deep for tears. For hours he stood there, watching the face of the only being who had cared for him in the world; and then Ned Burton went out and did as she had before bade him, and, with the money she had hoarded up for the purpose, and that produced by the sale of the last few articles in the house, save his father's sea-chest, obtained for her an humble funeral, truly, but not that of a pauper. Then, leaving the chest with a neighbour till he should return and claim it, he went forth penniless into the world to seek his fortune.

Ned Burton's ambition was to be a sailor—not that he knew anything of the sea, except that his father had spent his life on it. His mother could not read or write, and, unable to instruct him or to

pay for his instruction, being, indeed, too poor to do without the pittance his labours brought, she had allowed him to grow up in extreme ignorance—though, according to the faint light that was in her, she had taught him, to the best of her power, to do right. Still poor Ned knew nothing of religion. He had never been taught even to pray. Thus, helpless and forlorn, he went forth to battle with the world. A neighbour had told him that big ships sailed from Portsmouth, so towards Portsmouth he bent his steps, inquiring his way as he went. A few of those who know him, and had bought his mother's oranges and bobbins, gave him a few pence, and filled his wallet with crusts of bread, and scraps of cheese and bacon, so that he had not to beg for food.

At night he slept under haystacks or hedges, or in empty barns, and thus in time he reached Portsmouth, sore-footed, weary, and hungry, for during the last day his wallet had been empty.

Wandering down the High Street, he passed through a large gateway, and out on a common, from whence he caught sight of the blue sea, and several huge ships floating on it, but they were too far out to reach, and he had no money to pay for a boat; and he would have gained nothing had he reached them, for a poor ragged boy like him would not have been received on board. So he went back the way he had come. He asked several people if they could tell him how he could get on board ship, but they must have thought that he was silly, for they smiled and passed on.

He had begun to think that he should never obtain his wishes, when close to the Southsea Gate he saw an old apple-woman sitting at her stall. She brought his mother to mind. She looked kind, too, so he asked her. Something in his manner touched old Moll's heart. She asked him several questions, and then said, "Sure, yes; there's what they call a training-ship for boys—the old —, off the Dockyard, at Portsea. They, maybe, will take you. Here's sixpence to get aboard; and here—you look hungry, lad—is some gingerbread and apples—they'll do you good; and now God speed you. Go straight on—you can't miss the way, and come and tell me some day how you've fared."

Ned went on through narrow lanes and dirty streets, till he came near the shore of the harbour, which was crowded with vessels of all sizes.

"If one won't have me, surely another will," he said to himself, as he gazed with wonder at some of the line-of-battle ships. "They must want a precious number of people to fill those great things."

He now began to inquire which was the old —, where boys were received. He was told that he couldn't see her from there—that she was higher up the harbour; but none of the boatmen he spoke to seemed disposed to take him on board. In vain

he promised his sixpence. He had gone out to the end of one of the slips from the Common Hard, when two seamen and a sailor lad came down, carrying baskets, evidently full of provisions, and directed one of the boatmen who had just refused him to take them on board the old —. As they were stepping into the wherry, the boatman beckoned to Ned, and told him that he could now go. He took his seat next to the lad, who, in spite of his own clean white trousers, and blue shirt with worked collar, and fresh straw hat, seemed in no way to despise his ragged dress. In a kind tone he asked Ned why he was going on board. Ned told him.

"Hope you'll succeed, mate," he observed. "A year ago, I was like you—only paler and thinner, and maybe fewer clothes to my back—and trembled when I went aloft; and now there are not many aboard can reach the main-trunk from the deck before me, or lay out smarter on a yard."

The tide was against them, so that Ned had time to tell his new acquaintances a good deal of his history before they reached the ship. They all seemed to take an interest in him, especially the lad—a fine, strong, ruddy-faced young fellow of sixteen.

"Well, just do you ask for Bill Hudson—that's me—after you've seen the first lieutenant and the doctor; and then I'll tell you what to do," said the latter. "You might lose yourself, do ye see, otherwise, about there."

When they arrived alongside the huge ship, and Ned proffered his sixpence, the men wouldn't let him pay it, but helped him up the side through the entrance port, when he found himself, for the first time, on the main-deck of a man-of-war. While Bill Hudson went to find the proper person to take him to the officers for examination, he was lost in wonder, looking at the huge guns, with their polished gear, the countless number, it seemed, of boys and men moving about—all so cleanly and neatly dressed—and the spotless decks, white as a wooden platter.

At length he was summoned. He trembled with agitation, for he felt so dirty, and poor, and miserable, that he thought the officers, when they saw him, would quickly turn him out of the ship again. The first lieutenant, however, important as he looked, seemed pleased with his appearance and manner; the surgeon pronounced him a healthy, able-bodied lad, fit for the service; but he had brought no certificates of parentage or age. Had he his parents' permission to come to sea? he was asked. They were both dead: he had no friends; but he produced a tin case which had been his father's. The contents showed that the owner had been a petty officer in the navy, and had borne an excellent character. But another question was put: could he read and write? (No boys could be re-

ceived at that time unless they possessed those accomplishments.) Poor Ned had to confess that he was ignorant of both arts.

He was finally rejected. There was no help for it; though, as his father's certificate-case was returned to him, the officers expressed a hope that he might be some day accepted, if he could learn.

He went forward, much dejected, to find Bill Hudson; for this was but small consolation to him. How could he learn to read and write, when all his strength would be required to obtain food for his subsistence? So he thought.

Bill heard his account of what had happened.

"If you had said that you couldn't read and write, I could have told you what would happen. But, don't be cast down, Ned. Little more than three years ago, I couldn't read nor write, and hadn't shoes to my feet, and scarce a rag on my back. I was a poor outcast boy, without father or mother—no shelter for my head, and often no food to eat. I picked up a living as I could, holding horses, running errands, when anybody would trust me. I didn't steal, but I was often and often very near doing so, as I passed the butchers', and fruiterers', and bakers', shops—just to fill my empty stomach. It wasn't so much because I wouldn't do it, as because I knew that they kept a sharp look-out, and I should have been caught. At last I thought I would try it on; and I didn't care if I was sent to prison, for I should have been fed, at all events: but that very day a gentleman passing, saw me watching a stall, the owner of which had just left it, as if I was going to take whatever I could grab; and so I was. And he asked me if I was hungry; and he gave me a roll from his pocket, and then he asked me where I lived, and I said, 'Nowhere;' and then he told me that if I would follow him he would show me where I could get food and shelter, and, might be, clothing and instruction, and means, too, of gaining my livelihood. Though I didn't much credit him, I went; and he took me to the Field Lane Ragged School, as it is called; and there I found all he told me, and more. I soon showed them that I didn't want to eat the bread of idleness, and they got me employment in the day, and in the evening I used to go regularly to the school, and sleep in the Refuge, till I earned enough, by working four days, to go to the day-school for two days; and I soon learned to read and write; and more than that, Ned, I learned what made me a Christian, which I wasn't before I went there. For, I tell you, Ned, I was a heathen; I knew no more about God and his love for man than a block of stone; and I thought that he hated poor people, and sent them all to hell, and that there was no use being good. I did not know that it was sin brought the misery I saw around me into the world, and that God hates sin, but loves sinners; for if he doesn't, he'd never have

sent his only Son into the world to save them. At last I was asked what trade I would be, and I said, 'A sailor;' for I had been reading about the sea, and thought I should like to live on it. So they sent me down here, and I do like it, Ned, right well. And now I've told you all this, because I want to ask you if you'd like to go to Field Lane. I tell you it is a blessed place; and a blessed moment it was to me when I entered it. You'd learn to read and write, and be looked after, and learn to gain your daily bread, and be told about God and Jesus Christ, and how to be happy; and if you don't know about them, you can't be happy, that I tell you."

Ned had been much surprised with all he had seen on board ship, but he was more surprised at what Bill told him, though in a different way. He said, certainly that he should like to go there, but how could he? Bill replied that "where there's a will there's a way." Many of his shipmates had heard Ned's history, and were interested in him; and he would speak to the first lieutenant and to some of the officers, who were kind, Christian men, and see what could be done.

Bill Hudson did do his best, and very effectual that was. He had acted as officer's servant, and saved up some money; and he went round the ship and told Ned's story; and all who heard it subscribed—some more and some less; and the officers, when they heard his proposal, subscribed very liberally. Ned was invited down to Bill's mess, and never had he eaten so hearty a dinner.

"No wonder the sailors on board here grow stout and strong, if they have so good a dinner as this every day," he observed.

"It's the same every day. No banyan days with us, now, in the navy," was the answer.

At last Bill Hudson's plan was matured; and the power granted him for carrying it into execution. Ned was told he must stop on board for tea. In the evening Bill came to him triumphant.

"It's all settled," he exclaimed. "You see, Ned, it would never do for you to go up to big London all by yourself, and to wander about, not knowing your way; so I've got leave from the first lieutenant to go with you."

"You—you go up to London with me; that will be good!" exclaimed Ned, delighted.

Ned slept on board, and, from the kind way he was treated, wished more than ever to go to sea. He was not aware—happily for himself—that he could have gone to sea, in the merchant service, without being able to read, and that only at that time, when it was resolved to raise the character of the men in the navy, that the rule with regard to reading and writing was enforced.

The next morning—Ned having been supplied, by the contributions of the sailors, with a suit of clothes, a pair of shoes, and a hat, and some shirts

and other things in a bundle—the two lads left the ship, and took the first train to London. Bill would gladly have gone on foot, for the sake of economising his funds, so as to leave more with his new friend; but his leave extended only over three days, and he had many things to do.

The boys arrived in due time at London, and Bill employed as much time as he could in showing Ned about town. As evening drew on they repaired to Field Lane, and knocked for admission at the Refuge.

"What? William Hudson come back! What has happened to you, lad?" exclaimed the porter.

"Yes; it's myself, sure enough. I've come back to ask for a night's lodging, if there's room, and to bring this boy, who wants one badly. Can I see the superintendent?"

"Yes, sure. You know the way, Bill; go on," said the porter, in a kind tone.

The superintendent was very much pleased to see Bill Hudson, and more so to hear the story with which he introduced Ned Burton. He promised, gladly, to look after Ned, and, if he behaved well, to obtain regular employment for him in the neighbourhood.

Bill found, on calculating the amount of his funds, that he might leave some with the superintendent for Ned's use.

"I don't distrust you, Ned; but London is an awful wicked place; and if you kept the money, it might be stolen, and you almost murdered for the sake of it," he observed.

The next day the lads went out together, that Bill might introduce Ned to some of the people who used to employ him. Some had forgotten him; some had gone away; but a few remembered him kindly, and promised to help Ned.

Ned could not help shedding tears when Bill wrung his hand, as he was about to start back for Portsmouth. Then, if it had not been for the Refuge, and the superintendent, and the good missionary, and the porter, he would indeed have felt very miserable and forlorn, in the big city; but Field Lane was now to him his home, indeed—his refuge from adversity.

He remembered, however, that he had to work; so he set about finding employment in good earnest. His decent dress and manner was in his favour; and he gained a few pence, though, being a stranger, not so much as he might have gained had he known the ways of London. At night he went back to the Refuge with a thankful heart, and commenced his schooling. He gave his mind to his task, though he found it very hard work, at first, even learning the letters. The next night it was easier, and he was soon able, when waiting for a job, to employ himself by spelling out the names over the shop doors and the words on the advertising papers. Sometimes he could get nothing to do, especially in

very bad weather; and then he went to the industrial school at the Refuge, if it was open, or to the day-school; and here he began to understand the great truths about religion, of which he had before been entirely ignorant. To one of the missionaries, who was especially kind to him, he took a great fancy; and to this good man he used to go, whenever he had an opportunity, and ask him questions, and to listen to his addresses. He first here heard the glorious tidings that "God is love;" and as he saw that beautiful principle carried out in every department of the undertaking, he could not help saying, "Ay, truly, this is God's work."

In little more than a year he had learned, by diligent attention, not only to read well, but to write a fair hand, while he had added greatly to his religious and secular knowledge; and, above all, he had become a new creature in Christ Jesus.

One day he received a letter at the Refuge from Bill Hudson. Bill wrote that he had just arrived at Portsmouth in the frigate to which he now be-

longed, and that if Ned would come down at once, he would see him on board the old —, where he was sure that he would be received. Bill, moreover, enclosed a sovereign to pay for his journey.

Ned was sorry to leave the Refuge, and yet he rejoiced at the thought of being now able, as he had so long wished, to go to sea. His parting from his friends and journey to Portsmouth need not be described. Bill was at the station to meet him, and at once went with him on board the old —.

He was, without difficulty, accepted. Bill had advised him to show his father's certificates. The first lieutenant spoke to him very kindly, when he saw them, and told him that he had known his father, who was a very good man, and he hoped that Ned would follow his example.

Ned Burton was no longer only a good-natured, well-meaning lad; he had now right principles to help him behave well; nor has he in any way disappointed the hopes of those who have taken an interest in his welfare.

THE BISHOP OF OXFORD AMONG THE WORKMEN OF READING.

THE Bishop of Oxford has been holding his annual Lent Mission at Reading this year, seeking, by a series of services and of sermons from some of the best preachers of the day, to awaken the hearts of the careless, and to comfort and strengthen those who are striving to enter the kingdom of heaven. Any one who has attended these services, and especially the daily early communions, when short, warm, and hearty addresses to communicants were delivered, must have been struck with the religious bearing and demeanour of the various crowded congregations; but, perhaps, among the sixty-five gatherings which took place in Reading during the mission week, there were none more remarkable or interesting to the beholder than those which were held in the ironworks and biscuit factory.

It was, of course, out of the question that the workpeople could attend any of the morning services; and though the evening ones were held at eight o'clock, so as to be available for the hundreds who are kept behind the counter until near that hour, it could scarcely be expected that they would be attended by many of the artisans, who, wearied after their long hours of toil, shrink from leaving their firesides—or, worse, from the ordeal of clean clothes, faces, and hands. And yet this is just the very class which an earnest clergyman is most desirous of reaching; for it is amongst their ranks that infidelity makes the most active progress, and there, too, in consequence of weaker restraints, immorality exhibits most her hideous forms. So, as the mountain could not come to Mahomet.

Mahomet must go to the mountain; accordingly the bishop, having obtained permission of the proprietors, went to the Foundry, accompanied by all the clergy of the town, and by several who had come from a distance to take part in the good work of the week. The bishop was not punctual, indeed punctuality is not one of his lordship's cardinal virtues; but on this occasion the train was the cause, and some uneasiness was felt lest the attractions of tea should prove too powerful, and that as the bishop was not present when the bell rang at the appointed hour, the men would not be present when he did come. However, nothing could have been more exemplary than the patient and quiet way in which they waited for twenty minutes in the large room where they had been assembled. This was what is called the finishing-room—a large shop, in different parts of which stood massive pieces of iron-work, on which the craftsmen and joiners had just been busy. A temporary platform had been raised at one end of the shop, and numerous jets of gas illuminated the place. A rough gallery runs round; this was completely lined with the intelligent but grim faces of the sons of Vulcan, young and old, while the various blocks of machinery and heaps of castings were occupied as good positions by others, and thus the whole gathering was broken up into varied artistic groups. About 300 were present; among them there was not a clean face; all bore on their faces and hands the marks of their industry, and strong was the contrast between their shirt-collars and those of the clergy, who were grouped near them. When the bishop arrived, he was greeted by a

hearty cheer, which gave him evident pleasure: his lordship likes to have the goodwill of the working class, and well he deserves it, for no man works harder for their best welfare than he does: in fact, he is one of themselves—the prince of workers—and on no occasion does he exert his wonderful winning powers of eloquence more than when addressing an audience composed of the bone and sinew of England. His address to the artisans of Sheffield will not soon be forgotten, and many of those to whom he spoke at Reading will treasure up his words of warning, encouragement, and hope. Most earnestly did he exhort them against the slavery of sin, and urge them to follow after that truth which alone can make men free. He spoke of the danger a man was in, when he gave up one sin, of falling into another: as, for instance, pride. It was true, pride was a sin of the spirit, but it was quite as bad as the sins of lust and drink, of which he had just spoken. "Amongst them there assembled, stood the eternal Son of God, who had taken their nature upon him, in order that he might redeem them, and having made humanity perfect again, might offer it first to the Father for the sins of the world, and then offer a new humanity to every man to set himself free. And what was the answer made to that? He knew many of those sons of labour whom he was addressing were thinking men, not ready to take mere assertions, and he knew that to such men many doubts suggested themselves. He knew there were persons among them propagating doubts, and publications were issued appealing to their reason, which were likely to make them distrustful. If a man gave way to these feelings, they would get the mastery over him, and the very strength of the understanding which they possessed assisted them in their doubts of the Word of God, and led them to say, What proof is there to show that it is true?" This question the bishop answered in a most masterly way, and wound up with a fervid peroration, in which he exhorted them to a life of faith and holiness, which appeared to be felt by many of those he addressed, for some countenances exhibited emotion, and the brawny hand was drawn across more faces than one.

On the following day the bishop went to the biscuit factory, where upwards of 600 workmen were assembled in a large room in the new part of the building. By the permission of the Messrs. Palmer, who always show their solicitude for the intellectual and religious improvements of their workpeople, they gave up half an hour of the work time to the purpose of hearing the bishop.

The contrast between the outward appearance of the two audiences of workpeople was striking. Yesterday, black was the predominating colour; to-day, white. Instead of ferruginous deposits, there were the dustings of flour; and there were a

greater number of youths, and consequently fewer stalwart figures, than at the ironworks: and the bishop accommodated his discourse to the character of his audience. Instead of speaking about doubts, and difficulties, and infidelity, he took up the story of Joseph. He showed that it was the fear of God which kept him safe among the temptations to a sensual and immoral life to which he was exposed, and exhorted them to cultivate a like religious fear, with a like end in view. He dwelt upon the temptations of youth, and warned them against giving way to them, under the false idea that they were irresistible. "Whatever temptations they were subjected to, should be looked upon as a proof that they were in training, and that God, if they were sincere in their faith, meant them to be saved. How unlike was one of their new-finished biscuits to the first grain! It must undergo a multitude of operations before it could be used, and a man who did not understand the principle of their manufacture, would think that the means they took to perfect their biscuits would only destroy them. If, then, it needed all this knowledge of the material—if all these different plans, and methods, and steps must be taken for one of these manufactures, could they not understand why there should be so many steps in what he might call that great manufacture, a redeemed soul? And so it was that it often seemed that the means taken by God was the most adverse to making a soul perfect; but that was done to teach men their sinfulness, and that they needed the blood of Christ to cleanse them from their wickedness." Without at all agreeing with all the Bishop of Oxford's views, and widely dissenting from some of them, we would say, in reference to his zeal and earnestness for the good of those souls committed to his charge, that they are worthy of imitation by other prelates.

To other manufacturers we would say, Imitate the liberality of the Messrs. Palmer. These esteemed gentlemen are themselves Nonconformists; yet not only did they give the bishop free scope and a hearty welcome, but, by releasing their men from work for half an hour, without any deduction of pay, they gave up what would equal twenty-five days' pay of one skilled workman, to promote the good of their workpeople.

The best results may be looked for when clergy and employers continue to promote the eternal welfare of the hard-working, hard-thinking, true-hearted sons of England; and all honour to that bishop who, amidst all his arduous works, is ever ready, not only to avail himself of every opportunity, but to make opportunities of using his gifts of persuasive eloquence for the furtherance of the Gospel among that class which is too often lost sight of amid the philanthropic energies of the great and good.

A WORD UPON BEING DISAGREEABLE.

BY THE REV. W. M. STATHAM.

I WAS walking a week or two ago in one of the lungs of London. You will quite understand the figure when I mention Kensington Gardens. The life-blood of this great city is supposed to oxygenise as it passes through the parks. These are therefore called the lungs of London; and necessarily Kensington Gardens may be looked upon, in an anatomical point of view, as one of the larger lobes of these said lungs. Now, of all places near at hand, commend me to Kensington Gardens. Don't talk to me of Kew in comparison with Kensington. I am not dazzled and puzzled with large names on little trees, telling me that this came from Biddygobang, and is the finest specimen of the Cracjawholidopolis; nor have I to move on in rank and file round some very weedy specimens of Eastern grass, but I can wander where I will—in the shade of beautiful elms, on the softest carpet of grass, and then go quietly home without being suffocated in an omnibus, or stranded in the mud in a Citizen steam-boat. Given a lovely day and a light heart, and then Kensington Gardens is the prince of places for producing a sense of mental rest and recreative exercise. But what has this to do with being disagreeable? Simply nothing in itself, but only by way of association; for on such a day I met a lady walking with a gentleman, and talking, as the French talk, with the hands as well as the tongue. As they passed the writer, one sentence fell on his ear which put the subject of disagreeables in a fresh light. "You know," said the lady (speaking of some one else in the feminine gender) she's not only PASSIVELY but ACTIVELY disagreeable." It is an unfortunate failure of my constitution, but I do not find it easy to forget little bits of talk like this. Consequently the thread of my meditations was broken in upon, and I only gazed placidly on the fair face of Nature again, when I bethought me of THE QUIVER, and being actively disagreeable.

My first meditation on the subject inclined me to transpose the words in the lady's complaint; for I confess that to me being passively disagreeable seems a deal worse than being actively so. In the latter case it works itself off somehow; and, like the egg-boiler, with the sand in it, though it runs out slowly enough, yet it's all gone at last, until some new accident of circumstance turns the mental constitution upside down again, and the same process has to be gone through once more. I am reminded of the Quaker in the seaport town, who, hearing a sailor noisily demonstrative, said, "Haste thee, good friend, and get all that bad stuff out of thee." There is some hope that matters will im-

prove in the actively disagreeable constitution; most combustible things work themselves off somehow; and certainly Nature after a storm is very fresh and fragrant indeed. But only imagine your passively disagreeable person! Why, there is no knowing when that horrible hippopotamus in the Zoological Gardens will wake: you may wait half the day, and surreptitiously poke him with a pointed stick, but there the lubberly creature lies, as ugly and as full of immobility as ever. To have to wear a tight boot on tender corns all day would almost equal the cleverest tortures of the Inquisition; yet how peculiarly passive the boot is. If Mr. Barley, the big farmer, treads accidentally on your corns, it's—oh!—it's very terrible; but then you begin to recover, and you have hope. But a tight boot, or a toothache, all day, and the next—and the next—oh! dear. Nevertheless, this is what *does* occur in human affairs. Who has not heard of people—yes, and decent people on the whole—having the sulks for three days, or a week, injuring their own digestion, and other people's too, by an uncommunicative silence, losing precious opportunities for a little pleasure by a persistency in the dumps? It is possible, I suppose, to be passively disagreeable in many ways. It is so for that little six-year-old boy, who persists in staying in the drawing-room, half asleep, when Mr. Jones is listening to Miss Smith's song, "Remember me," and wants to say something of the readiness with which he responds to the sentiment. It is so for the person who keeps the *Times* at the public dinner-table open before him for half-an-hour, looking at it now and then, as a hen pecks up barley, with a brief bob, and then finishing his repast with the comfortable satisfaction that your time is up, and that he's kept you out of the paper. It is so for any man who likes to leave the dead fly of his budginess in the ointment of somebody else's happiness.

Of course it is difficult to see how thoroughly disagreeable people can be happy in themselves. However, as a steam-engine can be made to go backwards, and work its wheels the reverse way, so I suppose there is a mode of reversing your nature, and finding satisfaction in spoiling any other person's garment of gladness. Why on earth people throw vitriol on the beautiful dress of a stranger none can understand who are themselves free from envy or jealousy. Surely this casts some little light on the mysterious progress of evil, and reminds us that the indulgence of evil passion goes on till not only is self injured, but there is actual pleasure in the misery of others. Of all leers that light up evil eyes, save me from the gaze of one who triumphs over others' troubles.

All my thinking on the subject has not yet led me to see how the actively disagreeable person is the worst to bear with; but, in either case, let me suggest that this is a world in which we should do with as little of the disagreeable as possible. There is ample need for all the kindness, forbearance, and consideration which human hearts can exercise. Of course it may be suggested to me that we must often needs be disagreeable if we are honest and sincere—that to speak the truth, to state candidly our opinion, to reprove and rebuke the wrong-doer—all necessitate that we should be thought disagreeable. Nay, more: that a child continually thinks the kindest parent disagreeable for not exactly falling in with its youthful wishes. Exactly so. I admit all this. But the reply is very plain. In these cases, our being disagreeable is not occasioned by our sulkiness, or our enviousness, or our budginess—not, in one word, by our vices, but by our virtues. Yet withal, I must say that there are disagreeable ways of being good; that there is a speaking the truth by so-called plain-spoken persons which is undeniably and unutterably offensive. The apostle demands, not only that we speak the truth, but that we speak the truth “*in love*.” To correct a child or a servant in the presence of a large company, or to tell a man angrily of his errors, are very provocative sort of things to do, and create awkward sensations in the heart, yet perhaps the truth is spoken. True! but not so as to soften the spirit, and convince the judgment, and change the conduct, but, alas! so as to indurate the heart and to stereotype the conduct. Every man has something of the porcupine about him, and disagreeable people, say what they will, generally manage to start the quills at once.

To know whether any one is disagreeable or not, you must not judge at a dinner-party, or a public *soirée*, but just travel with the wind through the key-hole, and go into a man's own home. Your very agreeable person outside is sometimes quite the *alter ego* at home. There is no “get-up” in the matter there. It may not indeed be possible to be a hero to your *valet de chambre*, but you can be noble enough to make those happy who should be dearest to you of all in the circle of your own domestic life.

It may be permitted me for a moment to turn to the brighter side of this subject, and ponder the many occasions upon which the heart has been made happier and the life better by an agreeable friend. In travelling, who has not fallen across a stranger who has lightened all the journey by his presence, and, sharing the tour or the voyage, has made us forget “Murray” altogether? Diamonds are not “the only bright things which never fade;” for there are memories bright with eternal beauty connected with the genial, gladdening presence of those who have striven to send sunshine into surrounding hearts.

To be agreeable it is not necessary to be tame or speechless. When a worthy old lady told Dr. Paley that she and her husband had lived forty years together without having a difference, he said, “How very dull and insipid that must have been!”

I do not appreciate in this case Dr. Paley's wit. It seems to me that a difference is not a necessary ingredient in human happiness. I know that in music you make melody out of discords, but I do not believe it to be so in human life. There may be much variety of thought and judgment without any difference of feeling; and that will be the happiest retrospect for any of us which has no one retrospective gulf in the affectionate intercourse of human life.

It has been suggested that there are some people who make themselves actively disagreeable because it is the only thing they can do. They take the negative side of existence, so far as healthy activity goes, and consequently their positive life is a very unpleasant one. They cannot accomplish any worthy end, and therefore betake themselves to the criticising of those who do. Their religious acquaintances are “cants,” Their fair-looking neighbours are “suspects.” Their ecstasy is great if they can only see the good skater trip, or the good singer go a note too high, or the good author under the flagellation of a critic. These things are what is popularly called “nuts” to them, and they relish them exceedingly, because they are non-doers themselves. Let us be thankful that such folk do not constitute a large species of the genus man. You do not meet them at many tables; they are rather the exceptional aloes of enmity, not the enjoyable fruits of friendship.

Having said so much, it may not be out of place to ask what is the true meaning of agreeable? My caustic friend seems to think it is a kind of synonym for soft-soapiness of manner, and that an agreeable person must be full of perfumed amity and polite mannerism. No such thing. There is, I think, a moral meaning in the word itself. “Agree” is derived by us from the French word *agréer*—to be of one mind, and that, in its turn, from the Latin *agrarius*, relating to lands, denoting especially an equal division of lands, and thence to settle by stipulation, the minds of parties being agreed as to the terms. Thus it implies honesty and sincerity. A truly agreeable person must be full of these. And thus in the common circle of social life we should help to be agreeable by being scrupulously just. I cannot blame Walter for being a little waspish, if his sister Lucy helps herself to two-thirds of the apple which has been given to them for mutual division; he will probably administer to her a surreptitious whack when no one is looking, because the agrarian laws concerning the apple have been broken in upon. It



Drawn by T. MORTEN.]

[Engraved by W. J. LINTON.

"Ah, me! ah, me! 'tis a common tale—
A hero's grave, and a woman's wail!"—p. 490.

is almost too much to expect a person to be agreeable when they are being chiselled out of their property in a Chancery suit, or when some one with bland looks and blarneying words pays himself, the Paul, and robs them, the Peter. Well, I admit exceptions. I do not ask impossibilities. I do not know whether, when the smoke will not keep to its own domain, but insists, donkey-like and determinately, upon not going the right road, preferring your study to the chimney, whether you can be quite agreeable; or whether, when your neighbour's dog has whined all night from twelve to six without cessation, you can sit down to breakfast with your usual *suaviter in modo*. Such things are hard to bear, and may be looked upon as having an apologetic aspect. Unbroken amiability is almost as unattainable as an ever-cloudless sky; yet for all that, it must be admitted that there are some people whose normal condition is not of an agreeable kind.

Does the reader say, "Why make so much of being agreeable? Turn to some tougher subject than that." Let me suggest that the spirit of our daily life is one of the most momentous subjects that can occupy our thoughts. The Gospel, when received into the heart, makes us agreeable, cour-

teous, and kind. It softens what is hard, and subdues what is proud, and represses what is bitter. We read of the great heroes of the world sometimes, and as we become rapt with admiration at their deeds of valour, we are apt to think them worthy of the first place in the heart's esteem. It may be so in the estimate of men, but there is one whose judgment was inspired, and speaking of the approbation of God, he tells us that "a meek and quiet spirit is in the sight of God of great price."

Suffer me, in closing, to suggest that those who are in a moral sense agreed, are by that very act agreeable to each other. We must have the same mind, if we would journey lovingly in the same path. We may all know by the way of God's appointment what it is to have the mind of Christ; but until by faith the soul is one with God through Christ, the question still stares us in the face, "How can two walk together unless they be agreed?"

Being disagreeable, either in an active or a passive sense, often leads to quarrelling. Well, therefore, may we seek to shed on others the sunshine of cheerful and sanctified hearts, ever remembering the counsel of the good old Book, "See that ye fall not out by the way."

FLOWERS FROM THE BATTLE-FIELD.

FERN leaves and vine, and the lichen grey,
Brown moss and heath, and a bit of bay;
In an envelope I see them lie—
Wither'd, and broken, and old, and dry;
Foul Mildew's fingers the packet holds,
The moth has died in its crumpled folds,
As a hermit in his hermitage,
Or a bird forgotten in his cage.
See, they are bound by a braid of hair,
Even Time's touch has not lingered there;
The gloss is gone from the curl's soft fold,
'Tis a memento of death I hold!

"What tales do they tell, those faded leaves?
What golden gossamer round them weaves?
What old romance from our heart's broad page,
Faded and brown in the breath of age?
Or fresh and bright as the evergreen,
'Mid splendid spring flowers' fading sheen?
Say, why so long have they lain away,
'Mong the treasures of thy girlhood's day?"
Ah, me! ah, me! 'tis a common tale—
A hero's grave, and a woman's wail!
They were treasured then as Ophir gold,
By a heart that now in death is cold.

Do they speak of those sunny Southern skies,
Of softest silver and sapphire dyes?
That all their brightness and beauty threw—
When those poor old leaves once glossy grew?
The light of that sun is quenched in blood,
That fell on their greenness as a flood;
Where they were plucked the warriors stand,
On the battle-plain of a sister land;
The music of birds, the humming bee,
Wandering for sweetness from tree to tree,
Have changed alas! for the trumpet's tone
And the cannon's breath hath death-seeds sown.

So treasures heaped on the sandy shore
Are swept away in the tempest's roar,
To show us hopes will only endure,
Placed on the rock that is firm and sure;
"The smitten Rock," the love that shall last,
When time with sin and sorrow is past,
Where waters dash, or the tempests beat,
Or the martial tread of mailed feet,
Or things that are past, or things to be,
Or height, or depth, or mountain, or sea,
Cannot divide us, or come between
Our souls and the love of the land unseen!

A. N.

DEPARTMENT FOR THE YOUNG.

A TALE OF THE BLACK FOREST.



ANY years ago there lived in a village near the famous Black Forest a worthy old pastor. His life had been spent in doing good, in helping the poor, and comforting the unhappy; and now in his old age he was calmly waiting the summons to his eternal home. Wishing, while still able to travel, to visit a widowed sister, who with her children lived at a considerable distance, and to give them a small sum of money which he had saved, he set out one fine autumn morning, hoping to arrive before nightfall at his sister's cottage. His path lay through a portion of the forest; and as he looked up to the clear blue sky, visible through the still thickly-covered branches, his heart rose in thanksgiving to the God of Nature, who had so graciously preserved him so many years. Suddenly he was surrounded by a band of fierce-looking men, who seemed to have sprung from the ground, and with threatening words demanded money.

Trembling, he delivered up his little travelling-bag, telling them to take all he had. After emptying it of the few articles it contained, the chief of the robbers seized him roughly, and asked whether he had any valuables on his person. Still trembling, he answered, "No." With a scornful laugh the robber set him free. Fear seemed to have quickened his steps, and sooner than he had believed it possible he found himself on the outskirts of the wood, and not far from his sister's dwelling, where he hoped in the pleasure of the meeting to forget his misfortune.

Then for the first time he thought of the money which he carried inside the lining of his black velvet cap. He said to himself, it is certainly a sin to steal, but it is also a sin to tell a lie. Am I not as bad as they? how could I die happily with a lie on my conscience? After a few minutes' deliberation, he turned back, determined that, cost what it would, he would restore peace to his mind by telling the robbers what he had done.

The moon had risen before he reached the spot where he had been attacked, and by its light, he saw several of the band sitting on the ground, smoking their long meerschaums and laughing over the contents of his knapsack which lay near. One of them held in his hand a silver bound and clasped prayer book, one of the few family relics the old pastor had possessed, and was just about to tear it asunder. At this moment he perceived the old man, who advancing to him said, in a timid voice, "I have come back to tell you that I am guilty of a lie. In saying that I had no other property about me, I did not remember, in my fear

at being attacked, that I carried a few gold pieces in the lining of my cap, which I had carefully saved for my poor sister. But I would rather die than have a lie on my conscience, so I have come to give you the money. Here it is," he said, taking it out of his cap.

None of them dared to touch it, so much were they surprised at this strange man, who seemed to them almost a supernatural being. Seeing the impression he had made on them, he continued, in a solemn tone, "I have lived long, and expect soon to stand before the Judge of all men; I dare not appear with a lie in my hand, for God's Word says we must neither lie nor deceive. It is a sad thing to live without God, and more terrible still to die without him; but worst of all, to be for ever banished from his presence."

Some of the men endeavoured to make a jest of these words, but in vain; their guilty consciences accused them of habitually disobeying the command, "Thou shalt not steal." Silently they returned every article they had taken from the old man, who with tears in his eyes, and in a few heartfelt words, exhorted them to repent of their evil ways, before it was too late. "Believe me," said he, "when I became conscious of my sin, I was miserable until I had repented and sought forgiveness; then peace returned to my soul. You, too, are sinners; but if you turn and seek God truly, you will have pardon and peace in this world, and afterwards an eternity of happiness." Then surrounded by them all, he prayed aloud, gave them his blessing, and departed.

During the remainder of his journey it seemed to him as if the dark wood was changed into a pleasant garden, his heart was so full of holy and happy thoughts. His sister and her children received him joyfully, and provided him with the rest and refreshment he so much needed after his long and eventful journey. Till his death, which took place not many months after, he never omitted to pray for that wild robber-band, and he cherished the hope that the occurrence of that day, and the words he had spoken, might be the cause of turning even one among them to a new and better life.

THE SPRING HOLIDAY.

A RHYME FOR YOUNG READERS.



"HURRAH! hurrah! a holiday!"

In glee we lift our voices,
While at our sport and happy mirth,
Echo herself rejoices.

Where'd be the good of holidays,
Ay, if you'd quite a host o' them,
If lazily you kept in-doors,
And did not make the most o' them?

To yonder wood we'll make our way,
Where pretty flowers are blowing,
And thousand leaves, so young and fresh,
Are budding out and growing.

The frost, and ice, and snow are gone;
And sunny April showers
Bring up the young and tender grass,
All prank'd with meadow flowers.

Aha! what whirring noise was that?
It is the lark upwinging;
And now in higher fields of air
His morning song he's singing.

His song will wake the later birds,
And stir them into motion,
And make the cuckoo let us know
He's come from o'er the ocean.

At last we've reached the little wood—
How bright with primrose blossom!
We gather handfuls by the score,
In sport we fling and toss 'em.

There's not a wood like this, they say,
For miles around our village,
So full of yellow primrose beds—
So plentiful for pillage.

Now for a game at hide-and-seek,
A sport both warm and healthy;
Then homewards we will turn again,
With yellow blossoms wealthy.

And as we go along, we'll sing
Of that sweet-blooming garden
Which one bright day we hope to see,
Through Jesu's grace and pardon.

KEY TO ENIGMA ON PAGE 475

"Our God is merciful."—Ps. cxvi. 5:

1. O mri	1 Kings xvi. 24.
2. U sziah	2 Chron. xvi. 8.
3. R iblah	Jer. xxxix. 6.
4. G erar	2 Chron. xiv. 13.
5. O no	Neh. vi. 2.
6. D elilah	Judg. xvi. 5.
7. I shmael	Jer. xli. 2.
8. S elah	2 Kings xiv. 7.
9. M alchiah	Neh. iii. 31.
10. E liam's	2 Sam. xi. 3.
11. R ezin	2 Kings xvi. 6.
12. C haldeans'	Jer. xxxix. 5.
13. I ddo's	Zech. i. 1.
14. F elix	Acts xxiv. 26.
15. U rijah	2 Kings xvi. 11.
16. L uz	Gen. xxviii. 19.

THE FAMILY HONOUR.

BY MRS. C. L. BALFOUR, AUTHOR OF "THE WOMEN OF SCRIPTURE," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER LXII.

KINDRED CLAIMS.

"If faith, and hope, and kindness pass'd
As coin 'twixt heart and heart,
How, thro' the eye's tear-blindness,
Should the sudden soul upstart!
The dreary and the desolate
Should wear a sunny bloom,
And Love should spring from buried Hate,
Like flowers o'er Winter's tomb.
The world is full of beauty, as other worlds above,
And if we did our duty, it might be full of love."

GERALD MASSEY.



HE sudden agitation of Dr. Griesbach which Mr. Austwicke had observed, had been caused by seeing a name, "Norman." The doctor had laid down a letter, and was glancing over the birth-register, when he saw the word.

"Norman!" he exclaimed—"Norman! Why, I know a sort of *filius fortunæ* of that name—at least, he gave me that name. Let me see."

He paused thoughtfully, and both Mr. Austwicke and Allan gazed expectantly at him, as, with his finger on his brow, he seemed recalling and arranging particulars.

"Age suits, stature—aye, and looks. Yes; and though the contrast in size is as opposite as in sex, he

has eyes so like little True, that I was struck with something, I knew not what, familiar to me in them. Ah, sure as fate, my Don Loftus is the man."

"What are you talking about?" said Mr. Austwicke, peevishly, as if unable, just then, to bear with his friend's eccentricities.

"Well—well—I'm only thinking; I may be wrong—quite wrong—that the twin brother of our little True is not dead. But it's not of him, or of this painful matter, my good old friend," addressing Mr. Austwicke, "that I came to speak. My time is short; and I came to say this, as one father to another—let that dear girl belong by birth to whom she may, I want her, and my Rupert wants her, to belong to us. There, that's plain English. As to the Austwicke acres, if she has any claim, we can afford to forego it."

"My sister?" said Allan, then pausing ruefully and correcting himself, he continued "I know enough of her—of dear True, to know she will not be married out of compassion."

"Compassion, forsooth! you young Boreas, who talks of it?—say out of honour and reverence; for something far higher than money or rank—for her truth and nobleness we come to woo her. Yes, I'll say so—Rupert and I are agreed fully in that. She's True, and that's dowry enough."

Mr. Austwicke grasped his friend's hand, and said, huskily—

"The child herself must answer. She has no mother to consult."

"Oh, as to that, I've not come without being pretty sure of the ground: the young people seem to have settled the matter, though I own Rupert complains of coldness recently; and talked so gloomily, that it, and the desire to be of use to you, if possible, decided me to run down at once."

"Pardon me, Doctor," said Allan, who had been for a few minutes in deep thought, "from your manner, just now, I thought you knew this—this Norman."

There was a tap at the door, and a servant entered with a message—"Mr. Hope, Mr. Nugent, Mr. Rupert Griesbach, and another gentleman," requested an audience on important business.

"See them for me, Doctor," said Mr. Austwicke, gloomily; "it's something about the inquest."

"Nay; excuse me, my friend, do you see them at once, while your son, and I, your old friend, are with you. I don't know why they come so thick, and four-fold;—my Rupert's coming must be mere impatience; but you will have to face your difficulties, and it's the best way to go forward and meet them."

"Show them in," said Mr. Austwicke, gloomily; and the party entered, Mr. Nugent first, with an open letter in his hand; he was followed by Mr. Hope, who leaned on the arms of Rupert and Norman. The blinds of the windows were down, but through the opening at the side of one, a sunbeam poured its ray so strongly that it made a bar of gold athwart the shaded room, and fell on the face of the last person of the group, lighting up his dark eyes, as he raised them steadily, with a melancholy lustre. Mr. Austwicke, glancing past the three faces that he knew, fixed his eyes on Norman, and said—

"You are the young man who so bravely risked your life in the attempt to save my poor sister. I forgot, in the confusion and horror of the scene, to thank you. I do so now. You are come, I presume, gentlemen, about the inquest?"

"We are come on other business, and nearly, we fear, as painful business to you, sir," said Mr. Hope. "We would—that is Mr. Nugent, myself, and this youth"—pointing to Norman—"see you alone, or you and your son."

"You can have nothing, Mr. Hope, to say to me that I should wish to conceal from my friends, Doctor Griesbach and his son; they know all my family affairs, including some I did not know myself till recently, and do not yet understand."

"All?" again, inquired Mr. Hope.

"Yes, all," Mr. Austwicke answered, proudly. "Speak freely: I'm not bound to believe all I'm told; but I'll hear it."

Mr. Hope had been placed in a chair at the end of the table, and the two young men stood one on either side of him. All three faced Mr. Austwicke, who sat at the other end, while Dr. Griesbach and Allan were at the side.

Mr. Hope drew from his pocket the marriage-lines, and a bundle of letters, proving his connection with the matter as having had charge of the children. The papers were passed to Mr. Austwicke, who examined them in silence. After a few moments he said, angrily—

"And you have lived, Mr. Hope, on my land, and your daughter in my house, and never explained this till now! Am I to conclude that you were in league with my sister, sir? Do you know what the word *conspiracy* means?"

Thus adjured, Mr. Hope earnestly related how he came to have the charge of two—as he thought, twin—children, explaining that he never thought them other than he had known them from their neglected infancy in Canada; his struggles to rear them well; his troubles; the appearance of Burke on the scene—which Mr. Austwicke recognised as being at the time of his brother Wilfred's return, and death. Mr. Hope continued his narrative with the flight of the boy, and his daughter Marian being engaged as Gertrude's governess; the sum paid by Burke for Mysie Grant's being placed as articled pupil (a double amount being noted down in Miss Austwicke's papers); then their coming, father and daughter, to live at Austwicke; and their entire ignorance both of any connection of the child or children with the Austwicke family, or whether the boy was alive, until—

"Until when?" exclaimed Allan, "until last night?"

"What, then, you saw my sister before—before—" said Mr. Austwicke.

"I saw the youth himself," added Mr. Hope, feebly, being much exhausted.

A look of intense defiant inquiry was on the faces of Mr. Austwicke and his son, as the one word "Where?" shaped itself on their lips.

Just then Dr. Griesbach laid his hand on Mr. Austwicke's arm, and pointing with his other hand to Norman, said in a low voice, which, however, was perfectly audible to all present—

"He is here now. There he stands!"

There was a dead pause, in which none spoke or moved. Norman's face, as all eyes perused it, was very calm, but pale to the lips. For a moment he cast down his eyes, but, rallying, raised them and looked steadily, yet sadly, towards Mr. Austwicke, who, after a few moments, with natural warmth—for was not his son Allan there before him, disinherited and ruined?—said—

"Dr. Griesbach, do you call yourself my friend, and at the very first blush of this plausible yet strange tale you believe it, and expect me to do so? But the law is not so easily satisfied: for a far less prize than the Austwicke estates a scheme like this might be organised. Young man, you will not win so easily." He addressed the last sentence to Norman, who now spoke, the light coming to his eye, and the colour to his cheek—

"Sir, if it's the Austwicke estates you speak of, I don't want to win them. I come here to displace no one; certainly not those who never sought to injure

me, and who have been used to that which, as I never knew the possession of, I cannot miss."

"Then what brings you here?" said Allan Austwicke, in breathless surprise.

"I came to seek one whom I left rashly, if not ungratefully. I came to get Mr. Hope's forgiveness; and in my efforts to find him, I made the discovery you seem to charge on me as a sin. Though why or how being wronged and injured—as it seems I have been, I, and another far more helpless—makes me an offender, I know not. There is one now in this room who can vouch for my life since within six weeks of my leaving Mr. Hope. He—Dr. Griesbach—knows I can work—maintain myself—with God's blessing, make my way; and that I am not without a friend—a kind friend—in his own near kinsman. I don't want the Austwicke acres, if it displaces or injures any one. I should certainly like to bear my father's name; that's not much, but it's something to one who has feared he had no name. I think I'd take care not to disgrace my rightful name."

The youth's words had come hurriedly; strong emotion gave a natural grace to his erect attitude and outstretched arm, and stamped the lofty impress of truth on his features.

"Disgrace it! no," said Mr. Austwicke, his better nature roused, in spite of his prejudices. "You shall bear it for me, come what may."

Allan had left his place as the youth spoke, and drawn near to Norman, his face kindling with enthusiasm. When, at his father's words, all the barriers of reserve were thrown down, he took both Norman's hands in his and shook them heartily, saying, bluntly—

"I'm no cheat. You'll not find me the fellow to oust anybody out of his rights. Why, then, you're our Gertrude's brother—that's a something to be proud of, I can tell you."

He shook his honest head ruefully as he spoke, for at that moment the loss of a brother's place to True seemed almost as bad as the loss of Austwicke.

"Gertrude's brother!" said Norman, in a perplexed tone; "that's to me another marvel. All this morning I have been saying, who is Mysie?"

"Nay, I can unravel that," said Mr. Nugent, "and I'm here for that purpose. When I came from my sister Maynard's yesterday, whither I had gone with Mr. Allan, I found a letter at home waiting me from a brother clergyman. Its contents were so important, that I did not go to Mr. Hope's at once about it, wishing to have some time—that is, a night's consideration—over it."

He paused, for the recollection of the tragedy of the previous night weighed on them all, and would not bear allusion. It was a relief to read the letter.

MY DEAR SIR,—You may not have wholly forgotten me, as I passed a fortnight with you once at our friend Archdeacon Wincanton's. But my object in writing is not so much to recall myself to your recollection, as to state a matter to you which, from the name of your parish, I think concerns the leading family there.

I was called, last week, to a Mrs. Johnston, a widow, who wished, before her death, to tell me something about her late husband, which she thought of importance. His former wife came out to Canada with

her brother, a man named Burke, who soon after returned to England. They brought two children with them—twins—a boy and girl, whose maintenance was paid for by some relatives in India or England; I am not clear which. It transpired, however, in a quarrel between Burke and his sister, that the children were not related—that the girl had been taken from a soldier's widow, named Grant, who died on the voyage. She was coming out on speculation, and had not a friend in the world. The motive for taking the child was not kindness, but to substitute her for the real twin sister of the boy, who had either died or been left in Scotland. My informant was much troubled in her mind when I questioned her closely, for she said her name had once been M'Naughton; that her first husband, an elder of the kirk, "and well-doing man," had compelled her to turn her sister, Isabel Grant, out of doors. That she had since learned from Johnston that her sister had really been married to a gentleman named Austwicke, and that the boy brought to Canada was hers; also, that the child had a twin sister. She added that Burke paid the money for the children so irregularly, that Johnston, when his first wife died, was glad to give them into the charge of a Mr. and Mrs. Hope, who took both children, believing them to be twins, to England. The woman told me this at intervals, and expressed repentance for her hardness to her sister, who, it seems, became insane, and, she supposed, was dead. She added, nothing had prospered with her. She had been wronged in her widowhood, by her husband's relatives, out of some property he left. She came to this country, fell in with Johnston, and, foolishly, married him. I obtained from her a few papers, enclosed, about the child; a baptismal register, which you can verify, and I meant to question her farther, but I was called away a few days, and on my return found she was dead. Knowing you are at Austwicke, and that a family of the name resides there, I trouble you with this, as, from all I hear of the late Mr. Johnston, he was likely enough to have connived at fraud, even for the miserable consideration of a few pounds.

Apologising for troubling you, and with all good wishes, I am,

Yours faithfully,

ERNEST ELKINSHAW,

Incumbent of St. Lawrence, New Brunswick.

Mr. Austwicke was the first to break the pause after this letter was read. "Well, then," he said, "my sister did no injury, at all events, to this girl. She has had a good education, and is provided with the means of maintaining herself in a respectable station."

"She is a young lady, father," cried Allan, vehemently, "who would adorn any station."

"She is as good as she is lovely," said Mr. Hope; "and, I doubt not, God's blessing will continue to rest upon her. At all events, while I and Marian live, she'll not want a father or a sister."

"Or a brother," added Norman. He looked round as he spoke, and missed one of the company from the room—Rupert had gone. They were all now preparing to depart, Mr. Austwicke saying to Mr. Hope—

"What I have heard has been too much for me to think over calmly; but be assured I will act justly, as I fully believe you have in this matter. More than justice I cannot promise. This young man has spoken, I will say, generously; but he is young—a minor. Neither I nor my son could take advantage of sentiments and feelings that do him honour, but which maturity and the world will change."

"Never, sir, never," said Norman, solemnly, drawing near to Mr. Austwicke, and holding out his hand.

"I believe it, I fully believe it, from all I know of him," added Dr. Griesbach, placing Norman's hand in that of Mr. Austwicke.

Perhaps there were tears in more eyes than Norman's at that clasp of kinship and recognition. But nothing more was said, and the company separated.

CHAPTER LXIII.

CONNECTING LINKS.

"Yet grieve not I, that Fate did not decree
Paternal acres to await on me;
She gave me more—she placed within my breast
A heart with little pleased, with little blest."

HENRY KIRKE WHITE.

THE terrible circumstances of Miss Austwicke's death supplied the neighbours with enough of matter for gossip to engross all their attention, and prevent any suspicion of the family difficulties and disclosures that had accompanied that event. Every one could attest how strangely Miss Austwicke had altered since she was summoned to Captain Wilfred's death-bed, and how her health had manifestly given way, though it was one of her peculiarities to deny it; so there was no difficulty about the verdict. "Insanity" was, in this instance, a true finding, though those who knew what troubles she had heaped up for herself, and bequeathed to others, were aware that she had overthrown her own mental faculties. Alas! in how many ways is it true, "He that pursueth evil, pursueth it to his own death."

In the faint light of the scarcely-risen sun, amid chilling mists and heavy morning dews, Miss Austwicke, with the utmost privacy, was borne to her grave, and laid beside the brother whose marriage she had concealed, and whose last request she had violated. In the blindness of a mind darkened by pride, while she was condemning his fault she committed a greater; and, while imagining she was upholding the family honour, was doing her best to affix the stain of indelible disgrace. Truly, the human heart is deceitful above all things, and, most of all, in this, that it deceives none so much as its own possessor.

While the sympathies of all the circle were aroused, and their feelings softened, was the time for young and old to interchange confidences; and it was not long after the meeting recorded in the last chapter, before Mr. Austwicke knew the state of his son Allan's affections as fully as Dr. Griesbach had known Rupert's; and though it is probable he never would have consented to the heir of Austwicke bringing a portionless bride of humble birth to be the future mistress of the Hall, as it was—with the full knowledge of the real position of affairs, and with the lesson on the meanness which family pride will sometimes stoop to, fresh in his mind—he gave his consent to an engagement, conditionally, that Allan and Mysie should prove their affection by waiting two, or it might be three, years, and promised to obtain Mrs. Austwicke's sanction.

As to Gertrude, Rupert had found means to obtain an interview with her while his father was engaged in the conference we have recorded. She was shattered in health and spirits, and commonplace words of love, just then, would have been out of place; but it was soothing to her to feel that whatever change awaited her, one heart beat in unison with hers; that an honourable family sought her as their choicest treasure; that no bitterness on Mrs. Austwicke's part—and there was some, and would have been more, but for dread of what the rightful heir of Austwicke might do—no such bit-

terness availed in any way to injure her—nay, rather increased the love of Ella Griesbach and the Doctor. Rupert's love could not be increased, neither could the fatherly tenderness of Mr. Austwicke. Whether as niece or daughter, she was his beloved child still; and though her real name of Mabel might never come pleasantly to the lips of any of them, it was not needed; she had the name they all said was characteristic—the dear, pet name—Little True.

And Norman, in gaining one sister, did not need to thrust from her place in his heart the sweet companion of his childhood. It was from his lips, on the day of Miss Austwicke's funeral, that Mysie learned the history of her infancy, and renewed from affection the ties they had so long believed were knit at birth.

If any distance and shyness prevented the expression of kindred affection between Norman and little True, these were feelings destined very soon to pass away for was not this new-found sister—she whose deep, soft, expressive eyes were so like his own that all observers noted the resemblance, and also that strange similarity of expression so much more striking than mere likeness of feature—this twin sister was to be by marriage the sister of one who, in a timid, far-off way, Norman had thought of and loved as a devotee might love a star—Ella; and that union could not but bring the object of his unuttered homage nearer to himself. Nay, his vague hopes, his wild aspirations, grew to shape themselves into a distinct form—to loom nearer, and to seem tangible; for did not Dr. Griesbach treat him with distinguished regard; and when, after a fortnight's stay at Austwicke, he returned to Woodford, the Professor, who had been apprised of all, welcomed him with what was high praise—

"You've acted nobly, Norman. Be thankful for brains; they're better than acres. Aye, and they'll win acres, without dispossessing anybody."

Norman was glad to have this openly-expressed approval of his one resolve, which, though uttered in a moment of impulse, was a settled purpose—a fixed determination. Neither Mr. Hope nor Dr. Griesbach had so definitely agreed with him. They both spoke of his age as incapacitating him from judging and acting in the matter, though, admitting he held to his resolution in his riper years, they deemed it very noble.

Meanwhile, there is one personage of our story whom Mr. Austwicke wished to bring to justice—the wretched cheat and miser, Burke. From first to last, this man had been the mainspring of evil to all concerned with him. He had witnessed the marriage of poor Isabel Grant with Wilfred Austwicke. He had lent himself, solely for the purpose of gain, to the nefarious plan of deceiving her into the belief that her marriage was a mere sham. He had been Satan's prime minister in craftily suggesting to Captain Austwicke what he knew to be false, merely from seeing Mrs. Basil in company with her brother-in-law. He had embittered Mrs. McNaughton, and got the wretched girl Isabel turned out of doors; had pretended to shelter her, and, if he shrank from actual murder, had, by mental torment, destroyed her mind. He had made a tool of his wife's sister, Ruth, or Janet, subduing her to his

